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Detroit Free Press

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020 | FREEP.COM E2

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Virus impact hits Michigan

Work, school changes on tap; events canceled

Kristen Jordan Shamus and Eric D. Lawrence
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Like the flip of a switch, the situation changed overnight in Michigan as the first two known cases of novel coronavirus — a middle-age man in Wayne County and a middle-age woman in Oakland County — were identified in the state.

"We are going to have to make some tough choices in the coming days and weeks," Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Wednesday evening. She recommended frequent hand-washing, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, staying home if people are sick and urged schools, universities, businesses and others to cancel large gatherings of 100 people or more to stop the spread of COVID-19.

"Groups should evaluate and make decisions about whether or not to cancel conferences, sporting events or concerts. ... This is to keep the most people we can safe. I encourage everyone to be flexible. Take care of one another. We've gotten through tough times in Michigan. We're going to get through this."

Even before the governor's recommendation, cancellations because of the novel coronavirus had begun. The University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Wayne State University, Oakland University and Michigan Technical University announced earlier in the day that they planned to switch from in-person classes to online learning.

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Omar Anani, 38, of Farmington Hills, the owner and chef at Saffron De Twah on Gratiot Avenue has been taking precautions to keep his restaurant clean like he was doing on Wednesday. Anani wipes down everything after customers leave. ERIC SEALS/DETROIT FREE PRESS

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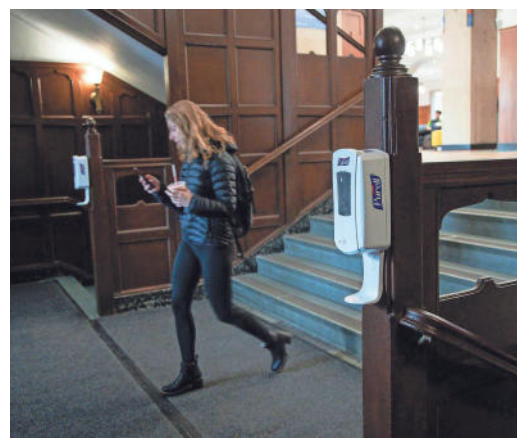

Hand sanitizer is placed at the entrance of the Michigan Union building on the University of Michigan's campus Wednesday. JUNFU HAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS

March tourney to miss its madness with fans banned

Chris Solari, Tom Schad and Chris Thomas
Detroit Free Press | USA TODAY NETWORK

March Madness has become March Sadness.

In a historic response to a booming pandemic, the NCAA and Big Ten announced Wednesday that each will ban fans from attending upcoming games, including their marquee postseason basketball tournaments, in an attempt to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, which has infected more than 1,200 people across the United States and tens of thousands across the world since December, including two confirmed cases in Michigan.

The Michigan High School Athletic Association also said it will prohibit or limit fans at least through this weekend's winter state tournament events.

Attendance at the NCAA tournament and Big Ten events will be limited to essential staff and family members. This includes the NCAA men's and women's basketball tournaments and likely the hockey Frozen Four, which will conclude in April at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit.

"The NCAA continues to assess the impact of COVID-19 in consultation with public health officials and our COVID-19 advisory panel," NCAA President Mark Emmert said in a statement. "Based on their advice and my discussions with the NCAA Board of Governors, I have made the decision to conduct our upcoming championship events, including

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Weather

High 54° | Low 38°
Clouds and sun. Forecast, **2A**

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SPORTS, 1C

Sports betting kicks off

Thomas Hearns shows off his betting slip on the first day of legal gambling in Detroit.

ELECTION 2020: MICHIGAN PRIMARY

Biden sweeps Mich. counties

Map nearly reversed from Sanders' results in 2016

Todd Spangler Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Former Vice President Joe Biden's impressive victory on Tuesday in Michigan's Democratic presidential primary appeared even more sweeping on Wednesday, showing he won every county in the state over U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

That was especially surprising given that Sanders won all but 10 of Michigan's 83 counties four years ago in a surprise upset of the eventual Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton, that helped establish him as a viable candidate on the national stage.

It was a shocking turn of events for Sanders, with the self-described democratic socialist becoming the victim of a Democratic electorate that, regardless of race and geographic setting, decided his radical views for reshaping government weren't what was needed in defeating President Donald Trump in the fall.

"What's become even clearer in the past week: Democratic voters don't want a pro-

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